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The Honorable George W. Bush  
The President  
The White House  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write today to request that you establish National Telework Week. I recognize that your administration and especially the Office of Personnel Management and the General Services Administration have been working to promote telework in the federal government. I believe that establishing National Telework Week will be one more tool in your arsenal as you work to promote environmental stewardship, family values and energy independence. Today, I am introducing a resolution to support the establishment of National Telework Week to provide an opportunity to encourage more employers to consider telework for their employees.

Telework should be a regular part of the 21st Century workplace. The best part of telework is that it improves the quality of life for all. Nearly 20 million Americans telework today, and according to experts, at least 40 percent of American jobs are compatible with telework. Telework reduces traffic congestion and air pollution. It reduces gas consumption and our dependency on foreign oil. Telework is good for families -- working parents have flexibility to meet everyday demands. Telework provides people with disabilities greater job opportunities. Telework helps fill our nation's labor market shortage. It is also a good way for retirees to pick up part-time work.

Companies save significantly when they have a strong telecommuting program. At one national telecommunications company, nearly 25 percent of its employees work from home at least one day per week. The company found positive results in the way of fewer days of sick leave, better worker retention, higher productivity, and increased morale.

According to a George Mason University (Fairfax, VA) study, for every 1 percent of the Washington metropolitan region workforce that telecommutes, there is a 3 percent reduction in traffic delays. George Mason University completed another study which suggests that on Friday mornings there is a 2 to 4 percent drop in traffic volume in the Washington metro region, a so-called "Friday effect."

This is promising news because it means that with just a 1 to 2 percent increase in the number of commuters who leave their cars parked and instead telework just one or two days per week, we could get to the so-called "Friday effect" all week long.

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Just a few weeks ago the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M University released its annual traffic congestion study which calculates that congestion creates a \$78 billion annual drain on the U.S. economy due to 4.2 million lost hours of productivity and 2.9 billion gallons of wasted gas. That's not even considering the air pollutants caused by idling vehicles around the nation.

I have stated before that work is something you do, not someplace you go. Hopefully we can make telework as commonplace as the morning traffic report. There is nothing magical about strapping ourselves into a car and driving sometimes up to an hour and a half, arriving at a workplace and sitting before a computer. We can access the same information from a computer in our living rooms. Wouldn't it be great if we could replace the evening rush hour commute with time spent with the family, or coaching little league or other important quality of life matters?

It is time that employers give telework a shot. National Telework Week would be an ideal time for employers, for just one day during one week of the year, to allow employees to work from home or an alternative work site to find out the benefits of telework. I know that telework may not work for every job. But there are jobs today that lend themselves to telework for which employees make the trip into the office every day of the week. Resources abound to help employees and employers set up appropriate telework programs for their businesses. Calculations also can show savings to the environment, the employer and the employee.

I encourage you to help inspire employers around the nation to give telework a chance, find out what it's about and how it can improve our businesses, our environment and our communities by establishing National Telework Week.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

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THANK YOU